

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
21 June 1967

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Arab-Israeli Situation Report
(As of 4:30 p.m. EDT)

UNITED NATIONS

1. With the public debate droning on and, in some instances, adding to the existing tensions, the search continues in private consultations for a formulation of proposals which might conceivably command a two-thirds majority. The prevailing view remains that the Soviet resolution has no chance of approval, and it is still doubtful that it will be pushed to a vote. Various quarters continue to comment that not even the Arabs were pleased by Kosygin's speech, and there is a general air of mystification over the Soviet performance.

[redacted] Cairo would "prefer" a vote on the existing Soviet text and has cautioned would-be mediators that the Arabs must be consulted about any other draft or they would not accept it.

2. It is likewise the consensus that the US resolution also lacks wide support -- less perhaps for its substance than for its authorship. However, the US mission has characterized the initial reaction to Ambassador Goldberg's presentation as "good to excellent from all friendly countries, and good from many marginal ones." Several French African delegates commented favorably on the US position, and two Eastern European delegates -- from Rumania and Czechoslovakia -- found a distinct improvement in "tone" in Goldberg's statement. By contrast, several Arab delegations thought Goldberg's speech tougher than the President's, warning that the US had

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worsened its position with the Arabs by trying to force them to negotiate with Israel and linking troop withdrawal with the achievement of agreements on other issues. Still others have commented that the US proposal for watch-dog arrangements on arms shipments to the Middle East is "unrealistic."

3. The number of potential mediators is legion, and some of them are by no means helpful to the US point of view. The Chilean delegate who has been working with a group of Latin American and Western European countries on a draft resolution to provide a "reasonable and just solution" to the major outstanding issues in the area told the US mission yesterday that its key paragraph was the preliminary condition that troops be immediately withdrawn to June 4 lines. Although he was told emphatically by a US mission officer that this was unacceptable, it is unclear how much impression the US objection has made. He said he would reconsider the language, but noted that this is a matter on which Chile feels strongly, and President Frei phones him frequently about it.

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5. Other proposals which may sooner or later be dumped into the Assembly hopper are: Partial Israeli withdrawal with a new mandate to Thant to try to bring Israel and Egypt together for talks -- a dubious proposal in view of the sharp clash between Thant and Abba Eban; a meeting -- outside the Security Council framework -- of the belligerents, the four big powers, and four nonpermanent members of the Council; steps to increase the UN presence in the area; and a simple referral of the whole issue back to the Security Council where, in the US view, the responsibility still resides. These or any other such proposals which may be offered will obviously be designed not only to bridge the gap among the principals involved, but to win endorsement from the non-aligned whose support will be required for any Assembly action. On balance the impact of this is a tendency to chip away at the bargaining position which the Israelis won by force of arms -- with the frequently heard rationalization that Tel Aviv can now "afford" some redressing of the balance in the area.

6. George Brown has added his voice to this tendency by making explicit Britain's long-hinted position that Israel should not retain territory won by force. In his General Assembly speech this morning Brown specifically asked that Israel not annex old Jerusalem. He also spoke of Israel's needs -- e.g. recognition of its right to exist and of free maritime passage -- but did not explicitly link these gains for Israel with the territorial restraint urged on it. London is, however, unlikely to press Israel actually to withdraw until some kind of package deal, with guarantees for Israel, is put together. The British may hope to salvage something of their economic relations with the Arab states by appearing to champion the Arab's territorial stand, while not actually exposing Israel to renewed dangers. London probably would prefer internationalizing Jerusalem and some of the conquered territory most vital to Israel's security.

7. Brown's speech may reflect a realization of how little influence Britain has on any of the belligerents, and that Britain's interests in the Middle East --

specifically oil and transport routes -- make it desirable to avoid seeming pro-Israel. London would help sell any solution agreed by the UN, the Four Powers, and/or the US-USSR, but apparently feels it could only lose by attempting any peace-making initiatives of its own.

8. At a meeting of the French cabinet this morning De Gaulle condemned Israel for opening hostilities in the Middle East. Although "France certainly considers it just that every state in question, and particularly Israel, should be able to live," he made it clear that France does not consider final any of the changes effected on the ground by military action. The French information minister's report on the cabinet meeting, however, heavily stressed De Gaulle's linking of the Middle East situation with the war in Vietnam: "Ever since the war spread to the Middle East, France has considered that there is no chance of arriving at a peaceful settlement in the present world situation unless a new world element appears. This element could and should be the end of the war in Vietnam by a termination being put to foreign intervention."

9. The French news agency has asked rhetorically to what degree, if any, this call for what amounts to a package deal on world peace was influenced by the talks De Gaulle had on Friday with Kosygin. Whether or not De Gaulle believes he has made a useful contribution to world peace, it remains true that his emphasis on Vietnam is considerably safer from a domestic political viewpoint than his attitude on the Arab-Israeli conflict. In any case, the net effect of the position he has taken -- as well as that enunciated by Brown -- may be to place further pressure on Israel's effort to hold out for direct negotiations with the Arabs before withdrawal of forces. Both governments, however, probably share the general skepticism over the prospect for such negotiation. In this connection, the Canadian government is already thinking about the nature and nationality of a possible mediation commission.

10. It should be noted, however, that there is no evidence as yet of any reversal of the generally pro-Israel

trend in Western European public opinion. For example, former Belgian Foreign Minister Spaak has written in a Paris newspaper that "neutrality is inconceivable" at a time when the Soviet Union and other Communist countries have declared themselves openly and without restraint for the Arabs. Spaak said he was for Israel because he could not accept a government's unilateral decision to modify an international situation in existence for years, nor could such a government state as a legitimate aim an intention "to wipe a recognized state off the map."

USSR

11. The government newspaper Izvestia today made the most authoritative Soviet statement yet issued on President Johnson's peace proposals. The full text has not been received, but Western wire services report that the newspaper took a critical stand without rejecting the President's plan. The press reports indicate that Izvestia directed its main fire at the US failure to call for "immediate and unconditional withdrawal," which the Soviets apparently consider their minimum demand. According to the press comments, the Izvestia article was "mild" by recent Soviet standards.

12. There are a number of indications that some Eastern European government and party officials are mirroring popular discontent with Moscow's extreme pro-Arab and anti-Israeli stance on the Middle East, and in at least two cases representatives have expressed the feeling that President Johnson's speech was more constructive than Kosygin's

Domestic Polish anti-US and anti-Israeli propaganda remains vehement, including a tendentious reaction to the President's speech which stressed the alleged identity of the US and Israeli positions. Much of the propaganda, and party boss Gomulka's hard public stand, is revealing of the regime's sensitivity to the widespread pro-Israeli sentiments among influential Jews within the Polish party and government apparatus, as well as among the people in general.

15. A Rumanian representative told US officials in New York that the views expressed by President Johnson in his speech were "not very far" from those of his country. He added that it is not possible to treat just one aspect of the Middle East problem, which must be studied from all its complexities.

ARAB STATES

17. The American University of Cairo is been reported to have been placed under Egyptian Government supervision, but not sequesterization. The president and other officers of the school were evacuated to Athens. An Egyptian respected by the AUC administration has been placed in charge by the government. It was the last foreign educational institution operating in Egypt.

18. While Lebanon emerged from the recent conflict with no loss of territory or casualties, the US Embassy there reports that the effects of the war are nevertheless very serious, particularly in the fields of national economy and internal stability. The economy is suffering greatly from the complete lack of tourists, the disruption of the transit trade, and the uncertain outlook for banking and other services. There is also the continuing problem of internal security and the real threat of confessional strife. Both Moslem and Christian leaders seem to be aware of this danger, and are reported to be attempting to prevent it, but both appear to have adopted such rigid positions that a compromise in the short term is not easy. The tight security measures give the country an atmosphere of calm, and the Embassy there is "mildly optimistic" that civil strike will be avoided.

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21. According to press reports from Jordan, Israeli soldiers have been firing over the heads of crowds of refugees to keep them moving out of the West Bank, and Israel has destroyed a West Bank town whose 12,000 inhabitants are now without shelter, food or clothing. These reports are somewhat exaggerated, but the Israelis have been "encouraging" Arabs to emigrate to the East Bank, and large numbers are crossing the Jordan River.

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LATE ITEM -- USSR

27. The Central Committee plenary session ended today with an indictment of Israel and pledges of unspecified support for the Arab nations.

28. The plenum went through the formality of endorsing the politburo's handling of the Middle East crisis. The resolution, however, adopted by this party body made fuller use of harsh, ideological language than did Premier Kosygin at the UN. The party document was unrelieved by the more positive aspects of Kosygin's presentation, notably his statement on the right of every people "to establish an independent national state of its own," and his reference to the responsibility of the "big powers" to work together for peace in the Middle East.

29. The resolution took special note of the 9 June Communist summit conference in Moscow calling the "joint

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action" of the socialist countries "a powerful factor in the struggle against aggressive intrigues." The resolution did not specify what "joint action" was planned beyond the demands for unconditional withdrawal of Israeli forces and Israeli compensation to the Arab states.

30. With President Podgorny in Cairo and Premier Kosygin in New York, General Secretary Brezhnev clearly dominated proceedings. He opened the plenum with a report on the Middle East situation and offered some concluding remarks at its end. His statements have not yet been publicized by Moscow, but they probably are closely echoed in the plenum resolution.

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